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YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

SYNOPSIS OF FILM

1. Canyon of the Yellowstone River.
2. Falls of the Yellowstone River.
3. Upper Geyser Basin.
4. Boiling Hot Springs.
5. Mammoth Hot Springs and Terraces.
6. Giant Paint Pots.
7. Riverside Geyser.
8. The Giantess Geyser.
9. Old Faithful.
10. Yellowstone Park, A National Game Preserve.
11. American Bison.
12. American Elk.

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

THE government of the United States has set apart for the use and enjoyment of the people for all time more than a dozen National Parks. In them may be found scenes of wondrous beauty and remarkable phenomena. Blue cold lakes, snow-capped mountains, majestic waterfalls, wonderful fountains of boiling water, giant forests, deep canyons, and rushing rivers are some of the attractions which every year draw thousands of tourists to visit the sights and scenes included in these playgrounds of the nation.

These National Parks are not like the tracts of cultivated land in some of our large cities with their green turf, shady walks, and bubbling fountains. Nature has made them what they are and the hand of man has altered them only to make them more easy of access, to provide trails and roads, and hotels and camps.

The Yellowstone National Park is the largest in the country. In all the world there is no wonderland like it. It is situated principally in the northwestern part of Wyoming and includes an area more than two and a half times the size of Rhode Island. Its average height is a mile and a half above sea level and it is enclosed by mountain ranges about half a mile higher. In this park is a greater collection of wonders than can be seen in a similar area anywhere else in the world. There are geysers, hot springs, beautifully colored terraces, deep canyons, high waterfalls, mountains of glass, and forests changed to stone.

Most travelers enter the park from the north at Gardiner, Montana. A stone's throw away from the station stands the great gray arch of lava marking the entrance

to the wonderland. At Mammoth Hot Springs, the first point in the tour of the park, are the red-roofed barracks for the soldiers and the buildings for the officers at Fort Yellowstone. Soldiers are constantly patrolling the park, watching for fires, protecting the forests from injury or theft, seeing that the roads are in repair, and caring for the game.

The park is the largest and the most successful game preserve in the world. Its thirty-three hundred square miles of mountain and valley and forest remain nearly as nature made them and no rifle is ever fired within its boundaries except by permission of Uncle Sam. The lakes and streams are a fisherman's paradise and there are many varieties of birds and fowl. There are bears,—big grizzlies, brown, cinnamon, and black. Elk, moose, deer, antelope, mountain sheep, and bison also roam there in large numbers. Visitors keep mostly to the roads and the animals have learned that they mean no harm. By exploring some of the lonely trails one may watch to his heart's content the different herds feeding or resting. In the fall and spring when crowds are absent, the wild deer gather in numbers at the hotel clearings to crop the grass, and the officers' children sometimes find them tame enough to feed. The big grizzlies are entirely inoffensive if not attacked and even then they will make every effort to escape. The other varieties of bear are playful, fearless, and even friendly. They are greedy fellows and steal supplies from campers whenever possible.

Among the more valuable herds in this animal paradise are thirty thousand elk, several thousand moose, innumerable deer, and a large and increasing herd of bison. These animals, usually called buffaloes, used to roam in uncounted numbers over our western plains and furnished the Indians with food and warm coverings. As settlers went farther and farther west, more and more of the

buffaloes were killed for their flesh and skin or just for the pleasure of hunting. As a consequence the herds gradually decreased until it seemed that the type soon would become extinct. To prevent this our government gave a few animals a safe home in the Yellowstone National Park. Here they have lived and multiplied until they are no longer in danger of extinction. Another herd of considerable size is preserved in one of the Canadian national parks.

Not far from Fort Yellowstone is the Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel from which most tourists begin their trip through the park. In this part of the park are those curiously beautiful terraces built up by the hot springs. The water of these springs contains much mineral matter in solution, such as sulphur, iron, lime, and salt. On reaching the surface of the ground the water becomes cooled and can no longer carry its load of solids and so deposits it in formations of various colors. One spring has built up a hill, all gleaming, glistening white, nearly two hundred feet high; others have made deposits in the form of terraces of blue, green, red, yellow, and many other colors. Over the edges of these carved basins pours the hot water.

From Mammoth Hot Springs to Lower Geyser Basin is a day's ride. On the trip many objects of interest are seen,—the Hoodoos, silvery-gray rocks of limestone pitched at all angles; the Golden Gate, a short canyon of yellowish rock made passable at great expense; Obsidian Cliff of very hard volcanic glass much used in years past by the Indians for arrow heads. All along the way one can see steaming springs, bubbling basins, and pools of beautiful green-blue water. Near Lower Geyser Basin are the Mammoth Paint Pots. Here the deposits from the mineral-laden waters have built up huge circular structures which are filled with a thick bubbling, steaming mass in all the colors of the rainbow. These are the cauldrons in which,

as one writer says, the gods prepare their material for painting the water, the grass, and the sunset colors of the sky.

At Upper Geyser Basin are perhaps the chief attractions in the park. Here are geysers of all ages from the Baby Geyser, only a few years old, to the castle Geyser, probably one of the oldest in the region. In its youth its eruptions were no doubt stupendous but age has lessened its powers. The eruption of a geyser is a wonderful thing. Think of seeing a million and a half gallons of water spout into the air to the height of a hundred and eighty feet regularly day and night, winter and summer, at intervals of seventy or eighty minutes. Yet this is the record of Old Faithful, one of the most noted geysers in the park. From the time of its discovery Old Faithful has erupted with very little variation except in the winter and early spring. Then the park is covered with snow hundreds of feet deep in the valleys and ravines. This snow adds to the water supply which finds its way underground and in consequence the geysers usually erupt more frequently and throw their columns of water higher.

The Riverside Geyser is another famous one in this region. During its eruption thousands of gallons of steaming water are forced from eighty to a hundred feet into the air. The wonderful sight lasts about fifteen minutes when the water gradually subsides until it is low in the crater where it remains until about six hours later when the same spectacle is again presented.

The Giant and Giantess are two of the largest in the park. About once in two weeks the Giant throws into the air a column of water from two hundred to two hundred and fifty feet high and continues this feat for an hour at a time. The Giantess is no less wonderful though more irregular in its action. For a whole day at a time this

great geyser holds its steaming column of water a hundred and fifty or two hundred feet in the air.

Geysers are, roughly speaking, water volcanoes. The boiling, bubbling water which is forced upward in an eruption is only the surface of a tall column which reaches down to the volcanic furnace beneath in the intensely heated portion of the earth. The underground water furnished by the rains and snows percolates deeper and deeper until, reaching the heated rock, it is turned to steam. This seeks a vent and the results are seen in geysers and hot springs such as are found in the Yellowstone National Park, New Zealand, and Iceland. These two latter regions are both famous for their geysers but their wonders are far inferior to those in our country.

The usual route of tourists in the park is from Upper Geyser Basin to Yellowstone Lake and Canyon over the Continental Divide. This is an irregular mountain crest which divides the drainage of the region, sending some waters down the slopes into the Yellowstone and Madison rivers and thence into the Missouri, Mississippi, and the Atlantic Ocean and the rest into the Pacific by way of the Snake River.

Yellowstone Lake is the highest large body of water in the United States. Its area is about three hundred square miles and its surface is considerably higher than the top of Mt. Washington. It is well supplied with fish. The far-famed story of catching a fish in this lake and being able to cook it in a boiling spring within throwing distance, is here proved to be true.

The outlet of the lake is the Yellowstone River. The canyon and falls of this river are two of the greatest scenic wonders of our country. Not far from the lake are granite ledges harder than the volcanic rock beyond. Over these ledges the river falls in two great leaps. The Upper (or

lesser) Fall is more than a hundred feet and the lower or Great Fall, is more than three times as high.

Below the falls is the canyon, three thousand feet deep, which the river has carved in the rock for twenty miles. Its most picturesque scenery lies within a few miles below the falls. Here the steep slopes, dropping precipitously from the pine-topped levels above, are carved by the frosts and the erosion of ages. Other canyons are as deep and narrow but the Yellowstone exceeds all others in the beauty of its coloring. Here are yellow, red, green, white, and even lavender, all the seven colors, in fact, except the blue and that is supplied by the over-arching sky.

Good views of the falls and canyon can be obtained from several different points. At the hotel near the river the dull roar of the falling water is heard and from an eminence near at hand one gains a splendid view of the profoundly imposing Upper Fall. Below, the river rushing on to form the Great Fall, presents a masterpiece of color and power. The rushing, roaring stream leaps for more than three hundred feet over the sharp-cut ledge, in its rapid descent changing its dull-green mass into milky-white spray which, caught up by the breeze, forms a veil of delicate texture screening the jagged rocks beneath. On either side of the mighty fall is the glorious coloring painted by the artist, Time, with a beauty that no human hand can even hope to rival.

QUESTIONS, TOPICS, SUGGESTIONS

1. Write to the Department of the Interior, Washington, D. C., for literature describing the National Parks of the United States.

2. Locate these parks. For what is each one famous?
On an outline map of the United States show the National Parks of the country.
 3. Plan a trip from your home town or city to each park.
On what railroads would you go?
 4. What large cities would you pass through? For what is each city noted?
 5. Show each city on your outline map.
 6. What is the cause of volcanic eruptions? Of earthquakes? Where are the great volcanic and earthquake regions of the world?
 7. What countries are included in these regions?
 8. What cities have been destroyed by volcanoes and earthquakes?
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